

Historic Stagecoach Ranch

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

I hope all my readers enjoy browsing through an antique shop as much as I do, because that's what we're going to do today. I chose the Stagecoach Ranch Antique Shop, owned by Mrs. Violet Miller, because of its historic location and interesting background. Located 1½ miles west of West Terre Haute on land between the old and new U. S. 40, the house is over 125 years old.

It was at the foot of the hill where the old Red Lion Stage Coaches coming down the Cumberland Pike would stop to change horses, and the passengers would get a refreshing drink from the cool, crystal-clear spring. This spring has been running for over one hundred years without fail, and the Millers have installed an electric pump to avail themselves of this wonderful water supply. After the chemical taste of our treated city water, it was a pleasure to taste this pure spring water.

Many Old Tales.

There are many old stories connected with this locality. One old gentleman still living, recalls that in his boyhood this farm was a camping place for the gypsies, who were allowed to pasture their horses for ten cents a head. One year when they were camping here, the king and queen of the gypsies had a terrible quarrel, and the king stabbed the queen fatally. She is buried somewhere near Derby Hill in an unmarked grave. Certainly this was a colorful era in Vigo County history!

On the porch of the Stagecoach Ranch is a well-preserved, old sleigh, assorted porch chairs and some outdoor iron pieces. Going through the door is like stepping into the world of the past, and with someone as well-informed as Mrs. Miller to be your guide, it is educational as well as being a pleasure.

Rogers Group.

First to take my attention was an authentic "Rogers Group," signed "John Rogers—New York." This is a Civil War scene labeled "Parting Promise," depicting the young man before going off to war placing an engagement ring on the finger of the young girl. Mrs. Miller told me that these rare pieces of statuary are hardly ever seen anymore except in museums. Another interesting fact about them is that the sculptor sent to Hannibal, Mo., for part of the soil used in the modeling of them.

I saw many fine examples of the old character or figure bottles—"the man on the barrel," "man in the moon," dolphin, turkeyfoot, hand holding pistol, and rare colored balsam and bitters bottles. There are vogues or fashions in antiques just as there is in anything else. For a time everyone was trying to acquire a caster set, then Currier & Ives prints, and now everyone seems interested in anything made of iron. One very fine example of this is a charcoal iron with a double draft and chimney. Westinghouse has one in his collection just like it.

I was interested in the little "starking stove," a smaller edition of the Franklin stove, whose purpose was to set the duration of the lover's call on his sweetheart

... when the fire went out, he was supposed to leave. There was also a "courting lamp."

Ancient Household Equipment.

Mrs. Miller proudly showed me many items of household equipment used in the pioneer days here in Indiana—such curious things as sausage grinders and stuffers, cherry seeders, apple parers, coffee mills, sad irons dated about 1860 and all sorts of fireplace equipment from efficient looking tongs used to remove meat from a fireplace kettle to the very popular trivets. I was particularly interested in an iron egg baker. Ever hear of one? It's round, about nine inches across and hinged. Inside are triangular compartments in which the eggs are broken, the lid closed and then place in the hot ashes to bake. To show that present day designers take many (if not all!) of their ideas from museums, I examined an iron contrivance in which meat was broiled in the fireplace... it resembled strongly the very latest in electric range equipment now called the vertical broiler!

The smaller homes of today are influencing the sale of antiques—the new low ceilings can't accommodate the tall old secretaries, and corner cupboards. People nowadays consider first the usefulness and secondly the purely decorative use of an antique. A short time ago there was a great demand for horsecollars to be used in recreation rooms, etc., as amusing decorations. However, to Mrs. Miller's great surprise one day, a customer actually bought one to put on a horse! Many people still buy strange objects to make lamps out of, or otherwise torture into "quaint" conversation pieces. Broad axes are in demand as wall decorations for country places, as well as fireplace tools. The current craze is buying old wall telephones in which to put small radios... when one lifts the receiver, the radio is turned on.

Clock Essential.

Committees are always looking for authentic antiques when houses are being restored, etc. First they look for a clock in keeping with the period to set the tone of the room. They are also on the lookout for examples of how women spent their leisure time in the early days. (With the huge families and the primitive conditions, I wonder how they had ANY leisure time!) I marveled at the time and effort expended on the hair wreath framed under glass, and dated 1811. Strands of hair were taken from all members of the family, and "combing" were requested from all visitors to make the rosettes. A gruesome pastime in my estimation!

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It is said that all friendly people are not antique lovers but that all antique lovers are friendly people. Sometimes a sad element is discovered in the search for antiques, such as an old workbasket with its half-finished work. And there was the beautiful old chest with these words carved across the front—"not to be sold except for bread."

Collectors Increase.

There is an increase in the number of occupational collectors now. Doctors collect anything to do with early medical practise advertising men collect old advertising such as calendar plates, scale men collect old scales and balances, bakers collect early baking pans, etc. Old valentines and scrapbooks are in demand, especially those scrapbooks which contain pictures of balloon ascensions. Country store equipment is in vogue now, and people want the old twine holders, the thread cases, candy jars, etc. It used to be that you could even buy a coffin at the old country store where you chose the handles and hardware and that determined the cost of the coffin.

Mrs. Miller demonstrated for me how much the old quilting frames when assembled were like the Colonial trestle table. She has a few of the early sewing machines, one of which makes a chain stitch, spinning wheels, flax winders and wheels, a Lillian Russell waving iron, a Civil War drum, carpet stretchers, fluting irons, chalk ware statuary which used to be peddled from door to door, a character tea cosy—a gypsy with a full quilted skirt—exactly like the one seen on Kate Smith's television program, a perpetual calendar clock which even adjusts itself automatically for leap year . . . there are some superstitious people who believe that such a clock is almost human and if it should "act up" or stop that someone in the family is going to die.

To end on a strictly local note—Mrs. Miller had the tiny embroidered basques worn by the women of the Freeman family who had the jewelry store on the courthouse square in pioneer Terre Haute. These ladies were so tiny and dainty that even a child can-

not squeeze into these doll-like garments today

In my opinion there is no better way to appreciate our ancestors than to study their tools and possessions. The love of antiques goes along with the love of history and genealogy.

Vigo Co. Townships
T.H. Trib-stare 1/8/68

History of Nevins Twp.

Begins 12-Month Series

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The history of each of the 12 townships of Vigo County will be published once a month for the year 1968—the 150th anniversary of Vigo County (1818-1968). This is the first of the series of twelve.

Nevins Twp. was formed during the May term of the State Legislature in 1882, at the petition of the citizens of Otter Creek Twp., for the formation of a new township on the east side of that township, as follows: All that part of Otter Creek Twp. lying east of the center of Range 8.

Nevins Twp. lies in the extreme northeast part of Vigo County, bounded on the north by Parke County; on the east by Clay County; on the south by Clay County and Lost Creek Twp.; and on the west by Otter Creek Twp. It is five miles in width from east to west, and six miles long from north to south, and contains nearly 20,000 acres of land.

Branches of Otter Creek rise in different parts of the township and flow from the east side through and leave at the western limit, affording stock water and drainage. The surface of the township is hilly and covered with timber,



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except a portion in the northwest corner, called "Henry's Prairie" in 1880. A portion of this is also called "Wet Prairie" and is surrounded by groves of yellow oak trees.

The name "Nevins" was given in honor of one of the earliest settlers, Jeremiah Nevins, who came here with his family from Kentucky in about 1818. He was a wheelwright by trade and made many of the spinning wheels so treasured by present-day collectors.

Adams First Resident

The earliest resident of Nevins Twp. was doubtlessly William Adams, who came with his family from Kentucky in about 1816. He settled on Raccoon bottom in the heavy timber, and probably built the first house, a log cabin 18 by 20 feet, with stick chimney.

At the same time, the Green family arrived from New York, and settled near Creal's Mills, building the first grist and saw mills in the township.

In about 1818 the brothers, John Adams, a blacksmith, and Samuel Adams, a farmer, settled just west of what is now Fontanet, formerly Fountain Station.

Sterling Lambert was also one of the earliest settlers, coming here with a large family from Kentucky in 1818. He also settled on the Raccoon bottom, later moving to the head of the creek.

The first laid-out road in the township was the old Greencastle Road from Terre Haute to Greencastle. On this road was located the first store kept by Richard Pruett about two miles west of the present site of Fontanet.

John Hoffman came to Nevins Twp. about 1818 and settled on Section 29 where he entered 80 acres of land. He was a native of Pennsylvania, and claimed to have driven the first cut nails ever manufactured in the new world.

The first school house in Nevins Twp. was located about one and one-half miles north of Fontanet in the middle of the timber. It was built of logs, with nearly one entire end left open for the admission of the huge fire logs of that time. The first teacher was John McGinnis, and the school was taught on the subscription system. The modest sum of \$1.50 per pupil for a three-month term was charged as tuition for the 18 to 20 pupils.

Doctors, Preachers Move In

The first doctor in the township was Alexander Hodgkiss, located on the Terre Haute Road near Markle's Mill.

The first preacher is supposed to have been the Rev. Billings, a Baptist. The first church was built by the Christian denomination about two and one-half miles northwest of Fontanet. It was built of logs, 36 by 40 feet, and has long since disappeared. The brothers Michael and Job Coombs were the first preachers there.

The Otter Creek Union Church was built about 1855 from subscriptions from all denominations living in the vicinity. David Hays was the first preacher for this church.

The first post office in Nevins Twp. was at Fruit Hill. John Bell was the first postmaster. This was soon discontinued, and the post office was established at Fountain (Fontanet) with G. W. Morland as postmaster.

One of the first coal mines to be opened in Vigo County was the one started in 1871 by Daniel Webster. This coal mining operation was responsible for the little village of Coal Bluff.

Cemeteries listed in Nevins Twp. included Burnett Cemetery in Section 27, Sulphur Springs in Section 11, Cress Cemetery in Section 1, Adkins Cemetery in Section 12 and the McClintock Cemetery in Section 14.

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Home Ec Club Publishes Prairie Creek History

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

A ways and means project of the Prairie Creek Home Ec Club has resulted in an interesting booklet entitled "The History of Prairie Creek and Prairie Creek Township, Vigo County, Ind.—1816-1972." The club ladies gathered information from Dr. Hunt, Warren Yeager and Mrs. Lola Brown. They included photographs of new and old firetrucks, World War II memorial plaque, the high school building which was torn down in the 1960s, and a model of an early log school house.

Printed at the U.S. Penitentiary, the attractive booklet complete with map is available from members of the club in that community.

In 1819, when Prairie Creek Twp. was platted, it included all of Township 10 North and Range 10 West and all lands east of the Wabash river in Range 11 West. In 1856 the northern tier of sections were taken from this township and added to Prairieton Twp.

The first wagon road (Old Army Road) through the township was opened and used for communication between Fort Knox and Fort Harrison in 1812. It passed nearly north and south, on the east side of Battlerow Prairie, on much the same ground as that of the present road in that locality. This was the only public highway in this part of the state up to the year of 1823 when the present State Road 63 was laid out and opened.

In 1816, the first house in the township was built, a small log cabin of Joseph Liston located about two miles northeast of Middletown. In 1817, David Lykins, Josiah Wilson, William Armstrong and families settled in Section 29, on the Old Army Road near the present Lykins Cemetery. As postmaster, David Lykins established the first post office here. Before 1820, some of the settlers were: Dr. E. Shattuck, Wm. Paddock, Jas. Johnston, Wm. Thomas, Wm. Drake and Nicholas Yeager. This first settlement, called Battlerow, was the first town activity. The first grist mill was here; also a cotton gin, doctor, store, blacksmith, undertaker, etc. The Battle-

row area was very active until the mid 1820s when business began on Prairie Creek and the town started to develop. There are several theories as to the name "Battlerow" but the ladies chose to believe it derived its name from the alleged Indian battles in that area.



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About 1820 a small village was started about half a mile south of the present location of Prairie Creek. It included three or four log houses and three potter shops and was known as Pottersville. "The clay used in the potter shops was hauled from Brazil and mixed with clay which was dug near the shops." Surely the ladies meant the area which was to become Clay County as neither the county nor the town of Brazil was in existence in 1820.

Middletown derived its name from the fact it was the half-way point between Merom and Fort Harrison for the stage coach line. The name was later changed to Prairie Creek. Where the town was to be located was owned by two men, James Piety who owned the east side of the road (now 63) and Elijah Thomas who owned the west side. They donated land for the town and helped in plat-

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ting it. The first survey was done in 1820 and grape vines were used instead of surveyor's chain. The work was done by Daniel Johnson, James Piety, Jimmie Ernest, Elijah Thomas, Vincent Yeager and others. There were 64 lots laid out.

The first building in the town was built of logs and used as a hotel. Daniel McDonald, proprietor. The second building was the store and post office of Jonas P. Lykins, the first postmaster.

In 1818 a log Baptist church was built near the site of the present one and a grave yard started on land donated by James Piety. Described as about 30 feet square made of hewed logs with a center opening in the roof for the escape of smoke when fire was built in the clay bowl-shaped open fireplace, the church was formed by Elder Isaac McCoy and 20 others.

Five Generations

Five consecutive generations of Yeagers have taught in Prairie Creek township schools. The first school was located about three-fourths of a mile northeast of Prairie Creek on the old east-west road. Another school was built south of the present Church of Christ. Another early school was located one mile north of Prairie Creek on the Hauger Hill.

The first grist mills in the

township were called "horse mills" — one bushel per hour and furnish your own horse power. There were three such mills. About 1821 a saw and grist mill was built on Prairie

Creek. Later a saw mill and wooden factory stood west of the town. A distillery was erected by Mr. Kelley from Kentucky in 1825. This supplied the town and neighborhood with whisky sold at \$5.00 a barrel. The distillery was located about two miles southeast of town.

About 1835 a tannery was started near the site of what is now Rector's Service Station. A brick and tile mill was located just east of the tannery as well as a store. A blacksmith shop was later built where the station now stands. This shop was run by Mr. Wilkinson. This was about the time of Isaiah Wilson's cotton-gin. Fifteen to thirty acres of cotton were grown in parts of the township in the early years and, as late as 1840, patches of one-fourth to two acres were grown here and there in the township.

The Gobins were a pioneer family who helped to build the town. William Gobin moved to Prairie Creek in 1832 and operated a brick plant at the south edge of town. He and his boys built most of the old brick buildings still standing in the town. The old Gobin mill burned in 1943. It was operated by William, and Simon Gobin, Joseph Keaton (grandfather of Buster Keaton, the movie star), Joseph Thompson, Lester Thompson, and Harvey and William Bailey.

Few Clues Identify Mill on Otter Creek

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

FEB 25 1973

Most of us are familiar with the location of Markle's Mill east of North Terre Haute at the intersection of the Mill Dam Road and the Rosedale Pavement at the bridge crossing of Otter Creek. It was in existence from 1816 until it was destroyed by fire in September, 1938. The stones of the foundation, and the flumes which carried the water to the inside wheel are still visible.

However, how many know of another mill on Otter Creek? Sidney Goodwin, in his first entries in an old ledger after he came to Terre Haute, accounted for a mill on that stream and on one seems to know who owned it or where it was located. The work he did was charged to John Brooks and L. S. Wallace and that could be a clue to its ownership. We do know of a mill south of Burnett, for until the 1940s, many of the timbers and a few old millstones were to be seen on the bank where the road crosses the creek.

From the figures shown, the dam must have been upstream and it may be that some identification of its location could be found if one searched for it.

On November 23, 1839, there is a charge against Wallace and Brooks for 1,420 feet of square timber, 628 feet of



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braces, 440 feet of joists, 384 feet of rafters, 600 feet of framing, together with planking, hewn timber posts, 530 feet of "floome" timber, 3,560 feet of rafters, 5,760 feet of planks on dam and "floome."

They are also charged, among other things, with six days' work on digging foundations, and 26 days' work shoveling and wheeling. Twelve panes of window blinds and four "pannel" blinds were charged on the same bill as the hanging of the same.

The total cost of all material and labor was over \$1,400.00, yet no one seems to know where it was nor how long it operated, which, considering the size of the building, must have been a good sized establishment. After the completion of this job, Goodwin returned to Terre Haute where he continued as a contractor, builder, cabinet maker and later a storekeeper.

The payment for this work and material shows much cash involved, as by this time the Terre Haute Branch Bank was operating. There are cash payments beginning with June, 1840, which include items ranging from \$2.00 to \$100.00.

In addition to these payments, Goodwin received hewed timber, weatherboarding, window framing, planks and sheeting, screws, nails, tools and other

materials needed for his trade.

Rufus Miner was charged for 216 feet of fencing, 439 feet of flooring, 140 feet of palings, 499 feet of one inch for caps and moulding, and one "necessary" for which he was charged \$20.00. He paid the entire bill with one barrel of flour and cash.

Two board bills were listed in the old ledger. One was for 40 weeks with a total of \$100, for which cash was paid. Another was listed "by cash, for boarding," at \$2.50 a week, it being 79 weeks, \$197.50.

"Lushus" (Lucius) Haynes was listed on the debit side with "to cash by Mother when you was sick, \$1.00" which Demis Larkens was paid \$33.00 for 16 loads of wood. Henry Brasher was charged \$281.72 for work on his house, which included "back-house and vault at \$5.00."

Albert Brown was charged for door frames, 177 feet of brace, 96 feet of joist, flooring, one "flite" of stairs, 64 feet of saddle boards, weather boarding, and three closet doors at \$2.00 each, and a pair of blinds, all of which was paid for in cash.

Charles Twiford was charged for window frames, 3 doors, 2 windows, 34 feet of shingles, one closet and "cubard" nails and a chest. He paid Goodwin by work on a well, with potatoes, corn and flour, and some cash.

William Chadwich bought a barrel of flour for \$5.50, an old gun for \$3.50, three pounds of butter for 50c, and a bushel of apples for 19c. He paid for it with a stove and for work done for Goodwin.

with a bushel of beans, a barrel of flour, whisky, and a coffee pot. Later he was charged \$75 each for flatboats. He paid for a trip to New Orleans in the amount of \$30, and bought a gallon of whisky at 31c.

William Harris bought two yearlings for \$2 each, and two cows for \$22. He also bought oxen for which he paid \$47.

Lester Tillotson was charged with numerous items, among which was found one "necessary" for which he was charged \$12.00. He was a man who was noted for several things in the recorded history of Terre Haute, but his violation of a city ordinance

has been recorded unintentionally.

The Sexton at Woodlawn Cemetery, in a report in 1840, reported that: "In addition to the above burials, Lester Tillotson has interred a child in the old burying ground where burials are now forbidden. Consequently, I have made no record of the burial."

Old account books such as kept by Sidney Goodwin are invaluable in learning about local history. Anyone having knowledge of such old records are invited to contact the writer at the Vigo County Historical Society.

Zenas Smith is charged with a "seller" door, one barrel of flour for \$7.00, for filing "teeth" on a saw, and paint. John Brooks is credited 96c for a bushel of potatoes, 25c for five dozen eggs, \$1.60 for eight pounds of cheese and 30c for a "gallon" of whisky. John Adams bought a coffin for a child in October, 1844, as well as materials for a coffin for Mrs. Bunch.

Charles Waynes bought 4½ pounds of tobacco for 19c, 10 pounds of wellrope for \$1.70, and two pairs of shoes at 50c each. He paid his account

Village of Sandford Has Interesting History

Community Affairs File
Cities and Towns (Ind.)
By DOROTHY J. CLARK

Is JAN 13 1974

It's always a pleasure to help serious students of history do research for term papers, whether they are at the high school level or college level. One such student, Miss Edith Bird, a senior at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College when this was written, did her practice teaching at Davis Park Elementary School. She gave me permission to use her excellent paper on Sandford, Indiana, in my historical column.

In researching her subject Miss Bird used the several county histories of Vigo County, Ind., and Edgar County Ill.; the local newspapers; plat books for the area; county directories; cemetery records; and personal interviews.

In the northwestern portion of Vigo County there is a quiet village known as Sandford. Approximately 200 persons make their homes along the eight streets, separated by the Penn Central Railroad. Sandford is bound on the west by the Illinois state line and on the remaining three sides by cultivated fields. Located within the village limits are a grocery store, a hardware store, volunteer fire department, Wesleyan Church, and a former school building converted into a community center. The Post Office is in the home of the grocer at Third and Eleanor streets.

The history of the village of Sandford, which is in the west central portion of Fayette Township, began across the state line in Stratton Township, Edgar County, Illinois.



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There is a Isaac Sandford settled about 1819-20. Having left Long Island, New York, Mr. Sandford went first to Cincinnati, Ohio., where he worked at the Gilmore Brothers Bank, owned by his brother-in-law. From there he traveled on to Illinois where he was among the first settlers. Isaac Sandford married Belinda Foster, daughter of Judge Luke Foster. Their children were Hiram (the first white child born in Stratton Township), Phebe and Harriell. Isaac Sandford became a wealthy and prominent citizen in his area, being engaged in its growth. In 1827 he helped survey the Paris-Clinton Road. At an early date he attempted the formation of a stock company for a steam mill, however, this project failed.

Isaac Sandford joined the group of volunteers from Stratton and Elbridge townships during the 1832 Blackhawk Campaign. He was soon elected First Lieutenant under Captain J. M. Blackburn. Later Blackburn was elected Colonel of the First Regiment and Sandford became Captain of the First

Regiment, Second Brigade of the Illinois Mounted Volunteers.

After the Campaign, Sandford returned to his farm which was greatly increasing in size and importance. At this time the Terre Haute, Ind. to Alton, Ill. Railroad was being planned and work begun. Large investments in the project were being made during the speculative fever of 1835 by local residents along the proposed route. Payment was to be made in state bonds.

Some men were contracted to grade the road while Sandford furnished the timber for bridges and ties needed in the construction. But the system declined, leaving depreciated bonds in the hands of investors. However, Sandford was able to realize a portion of his investment as he reclaimed in back payment his timber, which he later sold "down the river."

Growth Continues

During the next few years, the Sandford farm continued its growth. Within a thirteen-month period in 1837-38, Sandford bought and sold a total of 213 acres in three parcels worth \$1,064.89 in two Edgar County townships. The farm eventually encompassed 11,000 acres and a cemetery and a Methodist church. At one time or another, Sandford ran a blacksmith shop, tannery, brickyard, grocery store, and a saw and grist mill.

The Sandford blacksmith shop was perhaps the first in Elbridge township; the tannery one of the first industries in Edgar county. Bricks for the Methodist Episcopal church in Vermillion, Ill.,

were taken from the Sandford farm. Isaac Sandford opened a small store in 1842 nearly on the Illinois-Indiana state line. There he retailed a multitudinous variety of commodities needed in those days.

During the next year, 1843, Isaac and Belinda Sandford's son, Hiram, married Eleanor

Young in Edgar county. Hiram became part owner of both the grocery store and the mill, the two principal houses in the area. One source places the death of the elder Sandford in 1852, while the Map and Profile of the Terre Haute and Alton Railroad in Vigo County, recorded in June, 1853, is certified by Isaac Sandford's signature.

With the reopening of the railroad came a need for a town at the place of the then embryo village. During the winter of 1854-55, Hiram Sandford laid out the town of Sandford, located in Section 28, Township 13, Vigo County. Ninety-five lots were marked on both sides of the railroad with which the "streets are all parallel to or at right angles with . . ." Hiram Sandford also platted the Illinois village of West Sandford. However, there is a conflict in the date. The county history places it about 1856, but the plat book shows 1866.

Town Incorporated

Quickly the town of Sandford grew. Soon after its incorporation, Ephraim Wolfe opened the second store. Jacob H. Hussong opened the third store in 1858 and operated until he enlisted in the Civil War. A short time after the incorporation, the

Post Office was opened in Sandford. Isaac and Hiram Sandford operated their store for a few years and then sold to J. B. Armentrout. The Sandford saw and grist mill across the state line in Illinois operated until it was destroyed by fire. The first blacksmith in Sandford was William W. Fuqua. Other businesses were owned by Robert Anderson, Albert

Hussong, S. A. Rickets, and James Shickel.

There was a church within the Sandford limits at the town's incorporation. Dr. Minier of Paris, Ill., had organized a class of Methodist Episcopalians a few miles northeast of the Sandford limits. By 1854, the group had grown to such a number that a proper building was needed. A small frame structure was built and used until it was destroyed by fire in 1877. Immediately a new church was erected on the site.

Even after the town's incorporation, the school within its limits retained its district control. "A grade school has always been maintained here," notes the "History of Edgar County." In 1867 the Masons organized Lodge No. 330 in Sandford. Eleven years later in 1878, the Lodge bought from Ephraim Wolfe a building he designed and built for a store. Meetings were held in the upper story and the depot and post office were located below.

Next week's column will continue with Edith Bird's most interesting account of the town of Sandford and its famous murder and explosions.

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Town of Seelyville Was First Named Woods Mills

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Community Affairs File By DOROTHY J. CLARK

First clues to the recorded history of the little community of Seelyville can be traced back to an early settler in Lost Creek township. Originally named Woods Mills for pioneer D. C. Wood, Seelyville once consisted of only half a dozen log cabins. Now the community is spread out along either side of U.S. Highway 40, five miles east of Terre Haute.

Prior to the opening of the National Road (U.S. 40) in the mid-1800's, Seelyville was largely isolated; life was not at all easy for the settlers. Historical accounts indicate the first inn or tavern in Seelyville was built as an overnight stopping place for travelers heading west in covered wagons along the National Road. This location was also a stage coach stop.

Railroads have been a part of the community from the days when wood-burning engines stopped here to take on wood. The racks still remain along the south edge of town, carrying Penn-Central trains between Terre Haute and Indianapolis.

Seelyville was once a regular stop for the St. Louis, Vandalia, Terre Haute & Indianapolis Railroad. It was not until the 1860's that Seelyville began to grow, the direct result of the discovery of coal in the area.

The first mine was sunk in 1864 by Chauncy Rose and Riley McKeen. Later the mine was sold to the Indiana Rolling Mill who operated it a few years before disposing of it to George Arbuckle in 1878 when it ceased operation.

This first mine was located south of Route 40, just off Main Street. Since the land was owned by Jonas Seely, the mine was called Seelyville Mine, and about that same time, the name of the town was changed from Woods Mills to Seelyville.

Jonas Seely and his brother-in-law, Cyrus Bishop, came to Terre Haute in the early 1830's from Portland County, New York. They established themselves in business as wagon makers on North Fourth Street, about 220 N. 4th St., where the Volunteers of America used to be. As late as April, 1841, their advertisement appeared regularly in the WABASH COURIER newspaper.



DOROTHY J. CLARK

We know that Bishop bought 260 acres of wooded land in Riley township, about two miles west of what is now Riley, Ind. Honey Creek flowed through his land, so he built a dam and sawmill.

Government land was very cheap at that time, about two dollars an acre, so Jonas Seely also invested his money from the sale of the Terre Haute business in land in Lost Creek township where the town of Seelyville is now located.

In 1840 Jonas Seely served with the Volunteer Fire Department of Terre Haute with a Fire Engine Company. Sometime between that time and the beginning of the Civil War, he purchased the Lost Creek township land. The name of the post office located here was officially changed from Woods Mills to Seelyville, Ind. after 1873.

The first store was opened

by H. C. Dickerson in August, 1872, and was still the only one in the village in 1880. According to Beckwith's history, a corn-mill was the only other business there. Dr. McLaughlin was the only resident physician.

West of Seelyville was a steam grist and saw mill, prop-

erty of Moody Chamberlain, who also had a blacksmith shop.

In 1878, J. L. Dickerson opened a store at Round House Corners, near Pegg's residence, and at the same time a post office was located

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Dorothy Clark

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there with Mr. Dickerson as postmaster. This was, however, given up in May, 1880.

In 1880 there was a flag station known as Glendale where the railroad crossed the National Road. The community of East Glenn got its name from this location.

According to the Vigo County Business Directory & Gazetter of 1884, there was a thriving little village at Seelyville with a population of one hundred citizens. Mrs. Anna Dickerson was postmistress at the general store run by her husband, Henry C. Dickerson. Other business concerns included another store, a saloon, a saw and grist mill, a blacksmith, a shoemaker, a dressmaker, and three coal operators.

In 1870 another mine was sunk directly south of the first one, and was known as the Ehrlich Mine. Perrio's Mine was located a little west of Seelyville. It had a four-foot

vein of coal just 35 feet below the surface. The old Seelyville Mine was leased to the Bigelow Coal Co. of Hannibal, Mo., in 1870. Here a six-foot vein was worked at a depth of one hundred feet.

Within a radius of five miles of Seelyville during the town's best years, 1909 to 1915, there were 17 coal mines.

Seelyville petitioned for incorporation Oct. 7, 1907, and on Oct. 28, the citizens voted in favor, 169 to 22. The Town Hall was erected in 1935 and serves as headquarters for all municipal functions, including fire department and water works.

The 1960 census showed 1,114 residents. Today, however, the population of Seelyville is closer to 1,500.

Does anyone know where Jonas Seely is buried? Records at Woodlawn Cemetery show tombstones for Jonas Seely Sr. are inscribed "Canadian Volunteer, born Nov. 18, 1766; died April 18, 1826." Another gravemarker was inscribed "Jonas Seely Jr., born Jan 27, 1808," but no date of death. He married Sophronia Bishop on March 10, 1839. Her dates on the stone are "Born 1807, Died 1877."

Community Affairs File

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History of Hutton Interests Mrs. Mathew

TS APR 27 1975 By DOROTHY J. CLARK

The old community of Hutton, Ind., south of Prairieton, holds special interest for Mrs. Evelyn Long Mathew, 2310 Orleans Ave., Terre Haute, as she lived there, went to church, and attended school in the two-room school house. Her mother, Lela Maink Long, also attended school and church in Hutton when she was a child. Mrs. Mathew is interested in learning all she can about the little town of Hutton, Ind.

Before being called Hutton, it was called Battle Row, according to Mrs. Mathew. She doesn't know how it got the first name or why it was changed. Her grandmother was Florence Hutton Maink. Her grandmother's brother, Charles N. Hutton, was the first postmaster and had the blacksmith shop and general store in which the post office was located. Undoubtedly, this is where the community got its name.

Still standing is the abandoned two-room brick school house, built in 1890, and called District No. 2. Presently the school is in danger of being torn down.

The one room church is also still standing. At one time the church was on the east side of the road and built long side against the hill. It doubled as school, meeting house, etc. There were two groceries, one on each side of the Knoll Road.

Nearly all the Hutton children stayed in the vicinity when



DOROTHY J.
CLARK

they married. The "home place" was at the foot of Hutton Hill on the east side. It was later used by Elijah "Lige" and Ellie Liffick, and has since burned down.

The family portrait of the Hutton family recently acquired by Mrs. Mathew and reproduced here (see page ...) shows the father, John Hutton (1830-1907) and his wife, Eliza Ann (Farmer) Hutton (1838-1893) and 12 of their living children — Grace and George (twins), Sarah, Elmer, James, Mary, Ella,

Florence, Charles, Cora, Maude, Lela May and Catherine. Their son, Frank Hutton, was not in the picture. Having lost a leg in an accident at the Hudnut Hominy Mill, he was living at that time in the Masonic Home. The Huttons had lost other children who died in their infancy.

To complete the family tree of the Hutton family, Mrs. Mathew compiled the marriages of the children of John and Eliza, and the list of 46 of their grandchildren.

Grace Hutton married Oliver Little and had Ethel, Hazel, Sylvia, Mabel and Mae. George Hutton married Clara (last name unknown) and had Ben, Nell, Estes, Gertrude and Carl.

Sarah Hutton (1865-1915) married a Liffick and had Fred, Bert and Elmer. She married second William Lee and had Willis, Willie and Ruth.

Elmer Hutton married Lizzie (last name unknown) and had Mayme, Flo, Marguarite, Frank and Harry.

James Hutton (1874-1957) remained unmarried. He was a veteran of the Spanish-American War.

Mary Ella "Ellie" Hutton (1866-1938) married Elijah Liffick and had Verner, Alvie, Glen and Orville.

Florence Hutton (1858-1916) married first a Hilbrant and had Walter. She married second Charles Maink and had Anna Rosettie, Lela and Edna. Her stepchildren were Charles, Grace and Eva Maink.

Charles Hutton married Sally (last name unknown) and had Blanche, Claude and Vivian.

Cora Hutton (1878-1919) married Hiram Killion and had seven children, Arthur, Emery, Elva, Edna, Hildreth, Rachael and Robert.

Maude Hutton (1876-1951) married Asa Carter and had Rita and Johnathon.

Lela May Hutton (1881-1970) married Ira Lemon Hurst and had Irvin, Elsie, Clarence and Mabel.

Catherine Hutton married Dave Reynolds and had a son.

Continued On Page 8, Col. 1.

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over



SOMETIME before 1893, this family portrait was made of the Hutton family, of Prairie Creek township. Shown seated, left to right, are Charles, Cora Hutton Killion, the mother Eliza Ann Farmer Hutton, Maude Hutton Carter, the father, John Hutton, Lela May Hutton Hurst and Catherine Hutton Reynolds. Standing, left to right, are Grace Hutton Little and George Hutton, and twis, Sarah Hutton Liffick Lee, Elmer Hutton, James Hutton, Mary Ella Hutton Liffick, and Florence Hutton Mainka. Not in the picture was Frank Hutton. Three other children, John, Lizelia and William, died in infancy.

Dorothy Clark

APR. 27 1975

Continued From Page Four.

Roy.

Hutton, Ind., was listed as one of Vigo County's 27 post offices in 1890, and was still listed in 1902. The 1882 and 1884 county directories do not list the town. In 1890, Hutton

was described as "a post office in Section 9, Prairie Creek Township, distance 12 miles from Terre Haute. The mail was semi-weekly, and Charles N. Hutton was the postmaster, also the grocer and blacksmith. James Dent ran a general store, as did John Troutman.

The map of Prairie Creek Township in the 1874 Atlas of Vigo County shows John Hutton owned acreage along the

east line of Section 9. Adjoining his land in Section 10 was larger acreage owned by William Farmer. On the west adjoining Hutton's land was that of H. Farmer, and the southwest corner of Section 9 was owned by George Farmer.

It would seem that John Hutton and Eliza Ann Farmer married as was the custom because they lived in neighboring farms. And it also

proves that as early as 1874 John Hutton lived in the area.

Anyone having knowledge of Hutton, Ind., Battle Row, or of former residents of the little town are invited to contact the writer or Mrs. Mathew.

Historically

Community Affairs File

Speaking

By DOROTHY J. CLARK

TS APR 17 1977



In 1920 there was a movement afoot to annex the little town of West Terre Haute to the City of Terre Haute. There was much interest in the possible annexation, both pro and con, but the proposal never came to pass. However, the idea does crop up now and then as recently as the early 1970's.

The history of the community of West Terre Haute begins with the recording of a deed in the Land Register of Vincennes on April 18, 1817, when the United States gave to Philomer T. Dean a specified tract of 260 acres situated on the high knoll directly across the river from Terre Haute. The original town of Macksville was destined to stand on this land.

During the administration of President James Monroe, the National Road was pushed through from the East to the Mississippi River. Hearing the cry of "Westward Ho!" the pioneers tackled the dense forests with their axes and soon little clearings dotted the vast wilderness.

Those early settlers living west of the Wabash River needed a place to buy supplies, items they were unable to raise on their small farms. Crossing the Wabash by ferry or ford was extremely hazardous in times of high water, and the journey to Terre Haute was a long one. A trading post west of the river was badly needed.

Samuel McQuilkin came into possession of Mr. Dean's tract of land and was the first person to take advantage of the situation. In 1833 he erected a rude but strong frame building which still stands between what is now Third and Fourth streets and has long since been converted into a dwelling.

New immigrants arrived, and the valuable and fertile bottomland located east and south of the store was cultivated. As the lowlands were unsuitable for dwellings, Mr. McQuilkin solved the problem by laying off a town around his store building.

McQuilkinsville was platted and recorded Nov. 22, 1832, by Curtis Gilbert, Vigo County Recorder, and described as Section 19, Township 12, Range 9.

The name was shortened to Mac'sville, and later the apostrophe was omitted and the letter "k" inserted in its place. So the town was called Macksville or Maxville.

McQuilkin's store was typical of the general or country store of that time. It sold everything the settler needed from smoked meats to whisky.

Not only did the local resi-

dents support the store, but the construction gangs slowly pushing the National Road westward also traded there. Many of the workers took up permanent residence in Macksville. This not only increased trade at the store but also caused the building of a tavern by Smith Hinch at what is now the northwest corner of Third and National Avenue.

Mrs. Samuel McQuilkin, a lady of many talents, opened the first school in Sugar Creek township in the rear of her husband's store. The school was maintained by popular subscription. Township elections were also held in this building in the 1850s.

Robert McIlroy opened a store a short time later. In 1862, Prof. Elias Shumer taught a subscription school in the historic structure that has served so many purposes over the years.

In 1872, Richard McIlroy built the first brick building on Paris Avenue, and three years later, the first post office was installed in this building with McIlroy as postmaster, a position he held for over 20 years. The name of the post office was changed to West Terre Haute in 1898.

Many of the original homes were log cabins which were either replaced by frame or brick homes or were enclosed and remodelled.

In the early 1850s, Josiah Adgerton built the first blacksmith shop on Lot 70 on National Avenue and made the first steel plough shovel used on the National Road.

In 1867 John Griggs erected the first flour mill which burned in 1872.

Just north of Paris Avenue, where later a lumber company was located, Mr. Jones built the first steam saw mill. Near the site of the former school stood an old-fashioned brick yard.

The first Sunday School in Macksville was organized in 1870 in a small frame school building erected by Erastus Church at the close of the Civil War. The school was located just north of the railroad. Rev. Benson Rippetoe conducted the first religious service in the building.

Ellen Broadhurst, Henry McNeary and John Van Cleave taught the "Three R's" in the day school.

In 1875, while Sunday School was in session, the building was struck by lightning. Supt. John Peacock, more than a little ruffled, and other officials soon repaired the damage and the building remained in use until

the Vandalia Railroad acquired the land north of the tracks. The building was then moved to the site of the later high school and continued to serve as a school house for many years.

Old-timers of West Terre Haute recalled a major disaster in the community when the driver of a moving van crowded with Terre Haute residents returning from a religious service in West Terre Haute drove off the grade into the flood waters below.

The romantic story of Miss Sophronia G., a maiden lady who lived in a log tavern which stood on what became the vacant lot next to Hodger's residence on Miller Avenue is part of the little town's history. Miss Sophronia eventually married a Mr. Sanford, an elderly gentleman, and they lived happily together several years. Both died in 1850 and are buried in the south end of Lot 55 on Miller Avenue.

In 1880 the town had a population of 250, two stores, a blacksmith and wheelright shop, saw mill, shingle machine and cigar factory.

In 1895 the population had increased to 500, 10 years later to 3,500 in 1905, and by 1920 the town boasted 4,380 inhabitants. Census figures of 1970 show there were 3,006 persons residing in West Terre Haute.

Vigo County Public Library

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Historically Speaking

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Black growth in area reflected

*Negroes (T.H.) T-s 8-16-81
Valley Neg.*

By DOROTHY CLARK

The Act of 1807 of the Indiana territorial legislature authorized the owners of "negroes and mulattoes" over 15 years of age to bring them into the territory and have them bound to service by indenture for such time as master and slave might agree upon. If the slave would not agree to indenture, his owner would have 60 days to remove him to any state where slavery existed and sell them.

Among the papers and letters preserved by Joseph Jenckes, early Vigo pioneer, was one written from Daniel to John Jenckes, his sons, at Providence, R.I., in 1819 which reveals a very interesting phase of life in Terre Haute at that period.

From this document it appears that black men had a very uneasy lot in early Vigo County, although slavery had been abolished by the constitution in 1816.

Daniel's free colored man had some trouble. He writes his brother, "Oliver has got very uneasy; the people call him 'Jenckes' negro waiter' and it alarms his pride. I have had some fuss with him to keep him quiet. If it was not for the kindness I have shown him and his gratitude for it I could not keep him. I make it a practice to keep him at home as much as possible."

Daniel's letter continues, "I advised you in my last (letter) of my intention to take Major Chunn's negro fellow and of the terms, as the girls (two sisters from Rhode Island) have concluded to come on. I shall close the bargain if possible as I well know that the sum, \$320, and terms of payment are favorable for a youth like him, brought up in this climate, and whose term of service is more than 12 years. At any rate, if I do not want him, he can be disposed of to Lambert on the same terms."

The black fellow bought from

Major Chunn, a defender of old Fort Harrison, was an indentured black who could be transferred on the block, like a slave, until his indenture expired. The constitution of Indiana in 1816 put an end to slavery and black indenture, but the owners generally held onto the black people until the question was fought out in the courts years after.

As the old French settlers had a right to keep their servants, the Americans claimed the same, as John Grammar, an Illinois legislator, once said when speaking of the indentures: "I will show that air question is unconstitutional, illegal and fornenst the compact.... hain't I got as much right as any Frenchman in the state? Answer me that, sir."

So, according to Oakey, early local historian, "let us hope that the Jenckes... of 1819 had the undisturbed use of Chunn's negro fellow as long as they needed him."

The largest group of blacks in western Indiana located in Vigo County. The earliest arrivals were freed slaves from North Carolina. Later arrivals were emancipated slaves.

One of the first was Armistead Stewart who came to Vigo County in 1815 with his master, Daniel Durham, a Quaker. Durham later returned to North Carolina and brought back other blacks.

About 1830, black settlers arrived in large numbers, most of them settling in Lost Creek Township, where they cleared the land and became successful farmers. Others settled in Nevins and Otter Creek townships. By the beginning of the Civil War, there were 215 blacks in the town of Terre Haute.

Dixon Stewart acquired 80 acres of government land in Lost Creek township. Jeremiah and Abel Anderson acquired 240 acres, and the

Roberts family 280 acres, all virgin land which had to be cleared by felling trees and removing brush before it could be farmed.

In addition to the government land, they purchased more land from private owners. Most of this land was entirely unimproved also. The black settlers cleared it, drained it, built log houses and barns and became successful farmers.

Most prosperous was Dixon Stewart who had acquired 900 acres to be divided among his eight

children after his death. Jeremiah Anderson divided 730 acres among his children in his old age. Hezekiah Roberts and his son, Reden, also of North Carolina, acquired a 300-acre farm, while Kinchen Roberts from Virginia owned 280 acres.

The 1850 census shows that 41 blacks owned land valued at \$37,850. As early as 1835, black residents built a combined log school and meeting house on the northwest corner of the Stop 10 and the Fort Harrison roads.

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BETWEEN THE LINES

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY...

By Josie



Q. A friend of mine says Paul Newman is a real shrimp — 5'6" — and that his leading ladies have to stand in a hole. True? S. Hall, Princeton, N.J.

A. No, and it's a question Newman hates — he's very sensitive about the subject. According to one of his press reps, a writer gunning for the superstar published his height as 5'9" in an article three years ago, wording it in a highly derogatory way. Since then, others have thought he was short, asked him his height, made comments about it and he's really sick of the whole subject. In fact, he stands 5'11".

Q. Doesn't Julie Andrews age? What's her secret for keeping her figure? V. Taylor, Baton Rouge, La.

A. No secrets, other than hard work and keeping busy with her 6- and 7-year-old daughters (both adopted Vietnamese orphans). Julie does fondly recall the days when she was appearing in "My Fair Lady" on Broadway. She could eat her favorite snack — boiled potato and butter sandwiches on thick white bread — and never worry about the calories.



Q. Charles Grodin seems to be very negative on the movie industry. If he doesn't like it, why doesn't he just get out? L. Biehn, Houston, Tex.

A. Grodin's a fine comic actor and he likes making movies and wants to continue doing so. What he complained about in public recently, and what he hopes will change, is the mindlessness of a lot of the films today. "Hollywood has the resources to make films of social comment," he says and he urges the studios to do something about it. What social comment he made, of course, by co-starring in "The Great Muppet Caper" is perhaps only known to him.

Q. Cher always struck me as overly flamboyant. Has she calmed down any? J. Priesen, Chevy Chase, Md.

A. Not really. In fact, her neighbors in Beverly Hills are buzzing about her plans for her new house. Some friends say it's for security reasons, while others, less sympathetic, are saying she just wants to do something different to make the house stand out. But while the neighbors debate it, the digging goes on. Cher's dispensing with the front lawn in favor of a moat, as in English castles. The house will be entered through a specially built drawbridge.

Q. Do professional models really live the fast-lane kind of life you hear about? K. Molloy, Emmaus, Pa.

A. Some really do. Professionals in the industry are currently shaking their heads over one of the very top models — a Vogue cover regular and TV commercial star for one of the biggest cosmetic firms — who has gotten so addicted to various drugs, and keeps such late hours that she can barely stand up during magazine shootings. Unlike her peers who can turn on their energy for long photography sessions, she can only go for an hour at a time before her stamina runs out. She's a real stunner, too, and just in her middle twenties. Friends blame some of her erratic behavior on her association with a high-powered, frenetic artist.

Q. What is Fred Astaire going to do in the future? He's too old to dance, right? C. Risoldi, Sacramento, Calif.

A. In his view, he is. The few steps he performed on the American Film Institute tribute a few months back are all the public will get to see for the time being. He will be back on the screen, though, in a straight acting role in the film "Ghost Story" about a group of senior citizen friends who gather for a reunion and get scared out of their wits. It's due out in December.

Q. Do stars like it when they're spotted in an audience and asked to come onstage? S. Wilkerson, Norfolk, Va.

A. They do if they're prepared. Otherwise, they're not always thrilled to be recognized. Recently in New York, Peter Allen spotted Diana Ross at a table near the stage and tried to coax the sultry singer into the spotlight for a duet. Unfortunately, Ross didn't feel she looked "put together" enough to perform with Allen. "I'm not wearing my eyelashes," she hissed at Allen as the spotlight hit her. Besides her lack of makeup, she was wearing a totally sheer, little-left-to-the-imagination jumpsuit with nothing in the way of lingerie beneath it. She stayed in the audience.



Q. I recently saw "Star Wars" again and the scenes between Harrison Ford and Carrie Fisher looked awfully cozy. Were they fooling around during shooting? H. Lemerson, Bloomington, Ind.

A. All involved say no. Ford was happily married at the time. Mark Hamill is also happily married now but wasn't then and he recently revealed that he and Carrie Fisher had a fling during the filming. When the shooting ended, however, so did their romance.

Anything you'd like to know about prominent personalities? Write: "Between the Lines," Terre Haute Tribune-Star, 721 Wabash Ave., Terre Haute, Ind., 47808. We regret we cannot answer any letters individually.

Historically Speaking

Townships (Vigo Co.)
Community Affairs File

Fayette Township takes a bit of explaining

REFERENCE
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*T.H. Tribune-Star
Valley
3-21-82*

In 1817 the Durkee and Barbour families, prominent settlers of Fayette Township, arrived in Vigo County and settled near New Goshen. The heads of these two families were Daniel Barbour and Dr. John Durkee. Both came from Olean, Jefferson Co., N.Y., arriving at what is now Terre Haute in November, 1817.

While the family waited on the Ohio River, the two men went to Vincennes on horseback where they were directed to Fort Harrison. But instead of locating at Fort Harrison, they bought land on the other side of the Wabash River in what is now Fayette Township. The families remained in Fort Harrison while the log cabins were being built.

The history of Fayette Township takes a bit of explanation. Paris Township was formed May, 1820, by the Vigo County commissioners. It took in all that part of the county north of the line dividing Townships 12 and 13 and west of the river. The name was changed to Fayette in February, 1824. Thus the name of that part of the county now known as Fayette was first Independence Township, then Paris.

Dr. Durkee built a cabin on the northwest quarter of Section 18 in January, 1818. He was the first physician to locate in Fayette Township. After him came Dr. Hubbard. They had so few patients, however, that Dr. Durkee turned his attention to farming and Dr. Hubbard to chair-making.

With so many settlers coming in to the area, a need was soon felt for a way to get across the Wabash River to take corn and wheat to be ground into meal and flour at the nearest mill which was Markle's Mill on Otter Creek. Dr. Durkee built a ferry at the place now called Tecumseh.

Durkee's ferry was established in August, 1818, the first ferry on the Wabash to be licensed. This franchise was granted to Durkee and Salmon Lusk (who later owned what is now Turkey Run State Park). The first ferryman was Colonel Baldwin, who afterward became prominent in Edgar Co., Ill.

According to the permit, Durkee was to maintain a large flat boat of sufficient size to hold a wagon with



a team of four horses, a "piroque" in which to ferry over foot passengers and sufficient men to operate both boats.

The fares he might charge were set at 25 cents for a man and a team in summer, 37½ cents in winter. A horse or a man was 12½ cents, while cattle and sheep were half that price. In the next two years, a number of other ferries were licensed, several at the foot of the town, and their rates were much higher. A wagon with a four-horse team cost one dollar in winter.

It is probable that Durkee grew dissatisfied and made remarks discrimination, for in 1823 his charge for a wagon and team was raised to 50 cents, although he was never permitted to charge "city prices."

Durkee's Road heading down to the ferry is still evident on the west side of the river, but the road on the east side of the river, from the ferry to Markle's Mill, is not so easily located. According to the County Surveyor's office, County Road 56W runs through Section 18 from New Goshen through the north half of Sections 20 and 21 to Tecumseh.

To find the road on the east side of the river, it's necessary to go to the end of the North 13th Street

pavement, get permission from the property owner, and continue a fourth mile north on a private road to find the historic bend in the road. Beyond this point it goes down to the river and ends just south of the mouth of Otter Creek. The story about this sharp bend in an otherwise straight road is a very interesting one.

One of the most colorful characters in our local history was Drummer Davis. He had deserted from the British army at Detroit to join Harrison's army. He was the drummer at the Battle of Fort Harrison.

After the War of 1812 was over, Drummer Davis made his home with his daughter and son-in-law Stewart in Fayette Twp. He spent his declining years entertaining anyone who would listen with his war stories and Indian attack tales.

Terre Haute was often the scene of street fighting in those early days, on election days and muster days when whiskey drinking was more prevalent than usual. Then came the fighting. Most of these fights would take place near Drummer Davis, who would be rattling away at his drum, ignoring the disturbance around him.

Davis was described as a very short-legged, long-bodied man,

with a red face, big nose, a little man with a loud and often profane voice. While beating his drum he could throw one of his sticks in the air, toss off a glass of whiskey, catch the stick as it fell and never lose a beat, according to onlookers.

One day Drummer Davis heard that the county officials were going to survey the Durkee Road on the eastern side of the river. He had his son-in-law row him across the river and carrying his long rifle, he marched off to the spot about two miles from the fort where he had buried his comrades who had been killed at Fort Harrison.

Reaching the burial spot on a small knoll, he seated himself with his rifle across his knees and waited for the surveyors. Seeing that the road would run across the spot where Davis was sitting, they stopped and asked him what was the trouble.

Davis replied that his comrades were buried there, and as long as he lived, there would not be a road across their burial ground. He implied that someone else might be killed in his efforts to prevent such desecration. Whether out of respect for the dead or the living, the surveyors routed the new road around this hallowed ground and continued on with the road.

As the years went by, the reason for this bend was lost in history, and many people have wondered why the road curved with no apparent reason. A house is now located on the historic spot so well defended by Drummer Davis.

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**TERRE HAUTE
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Q. I recently saw a repeat of the "Edward and Mrs. Simpson" series and I was wondering if it was accurate in portraying their personalities. He appeared very noble and nice; she seemed like a real witch. Was that true? J. Friede, Galion, Oh.

A. Biographies of the couple that appeared, not accidentally, after the Duke of Windsor's death pointed two things about the two. The Duke, although a much loved and thoughtful ruler, was somewhat weak in his personal life and was therefore prey to the much stronger-willed and wily Mrs. Simpson. She reportedly called most of the shots in their post-marriage life and made the Duke's life quite miserable if she didn't get what she wanted. And there was definitely something she had wanted and didn't get, which made her quite bitter. According to her ex-hairdresser, Monsieur Marc (who now tends this nation's First Hairdo), "all she wanted was to be the Queen of England and when she didn't get that, she just made the man wretched. She's not nice, not at all a lady." Marc adds that her prime concern after losing out on the throne was to assure herself a place in the royal burial plot.



BETWEEN THE LINES

THE STORY BEHIND THE STORIES YOU READ ABOUT CELEBRITIES

By Josie

The "We Hope He Has a Sense of Humor" Department: Ben Cross, the British actor much acclaimed for his role as the Jewish runner Harold Abrahams in the film "Chariots of Fire" was recently chosen by director Louis Malle and playwright John Guare to star in their off-Broadway collaboration, "Lydie Breeze." He was even the subject of a big battle between American and British Actors Equity organizations over whether he'd be allowed to appear. But his first rehearsal rolls around and what reaction does he get? Malle and Guare come sweeping into the rehearsal hall, straight off a plane from California, and Guare looks at Cross quizzically. "You're Ben Cross?" he asks, with a dubious look on his face. "You played the Jewish runner, didn't you? We thought we were getting the Presbyterian one." Cross looked stunned. But then Guare smiled and stuck out his hand. Ha, ha.



Q. I thought Linda Gray was terrific on that recent daytime series about sexuality, but I read somewhere that she'd gotten into legal trouble. She looks so nice — what did she do? K. Andersen, San Angelo, Tex.

A. Nothing, actually. But a New York City tabloid reported that she had supposedly stiffed a New York limousine service for her bill. According to a company called Manhattan Limousine, a Linda Gray had run up a tab for \$11,000 while in New York during 1981 but never settled her account. They sued her, but she never answered the suit. And when the suit hit New York's Supreme Court last December, she didn't show up to contest or defend herself. So the court ruled against her, ordering her to pay \$11,554.90 — her original bill plus expenses and legal fees. The catch is that it was *another* Linda Gray who rented the limo — not the "Dallas" star. The paper has since run an apology saying they didn't mean to besmirch the actress' good name. Some stars *do* have a lousy reputation for not paying their bills. One singer in Las Vegas is so bad about settling accounts, that several car rental businesses won't deal with him. But, says one limo rental firm referring to another star's good manners when it comes to bills, "Burt Reynolds always pays on time."

Q. I remember reading about England's Prince Andrew and one of Princess Diana's roommates. Was there a romance? Sheila W., Jackson, Tenn.

A. It looked that way for about five minutes, but that's the usual duration, it seems, for the Royal Rake's romances. What you must be referring to is a phone call made by Randy Andy to Caroline Pride, on of Princess Di's former flatmates. He invited her up to Balmoral Castle to "meet my mum." But the invite was not as promising as everyone thought. The handsome prince just wanted to go hunting for foxes — the animal kind, not pretty young girls. Hence, no romance, but Ms. Pride did take at long look at Andrew's younger brother, Prince Edward. She thought he was "adorable." Stay tuned.

We All Knew Hollywood Was a Mean Place But This Is Ridiculous: A famous agent-manager who alternately handled or mishandled, depending on your source, the careers of a couple of blonde bombshell stars, was recently spotted in Hollywood meeting with a prospective, blonde client, who obviously wants some of his star treatment buildup. "I handle six to tens," he told the future sex symbol referring to the one-to-ten scale of beauty. "And you're only a five."

Anything you'd like to know about prominent personalities? Write: "Between the Lines," Terre Haute Tribune-Star, 721 Wabash Ave., Terre Haute, Ind., 47808. We regret we cannot answer any letters individually.

to local creek

Honey tree fascination gave name

Is AUG 12 1981

Historically speaking



Clark is Vigo County's official historian and formerly worked for The Terre Haute Tribune.

By Dorothy Clark
Special to The Tribune-Star

A bee's flight home with his load of pollen is always in a straight line. This is where the expression "bee line" originated.

Beekeeping and the uses of honey were known in prehistoric times, even preceding the development of agriculture. First the honey of wild bees was gathered, but before long, the techniques of managing the hives became generally known, and beekeeping became common.

Down through the centuries, honey has had many functions. It was a medium of exchange. It also was used as an embalming fluid in Egypt and used to preserve fruits in India. Germs cannot survive in honey, so it has had centuries of use in the kitchen for its antiseptic properties.

Cow pastures have always been beekeeper's country. Blooming trees, paw-paw bushes and blooming plants of all kinds have furnished the blossoms that attracted the bees.

The basswood tree was very

desirable, as honey made from its flowers was clear as water and a good source of income. Clover honey is very popular, but only a true honey gourmet can correctly identify the source of honey through its aroma, color and taste.

Beekeepers were involved with swarming during July and August. Modern beekeepers try to prevent this process, but the old-timers preferred to let the bees swarm and

in that way increase the number of colonies.

They were seldom stung, not even when they removed the honey. They wore a bee bonnet to protect their faces, but usually wore no gloves.

Only a few worker bees were assigned each day to serve as guards, and these could be so confused by the bee smoker that they would forget their assignment. A few puffs at the entrance and at the top, when the lid of the hive was lifted a bit, were sufficient.

As the filled sections or honey combs were removed, the rest of the bees in the colony went about their tasks and paid no attention to the beekeeper.

He also learned to handle bees in slow motion. Any quick movement of his hands would result in several stings. Bees can smell fear, and anyone who was afraid of bees was warned to keep his distance.

The humming of swarming bee colonies can be heard for some

distance on a summer day. Someone would keep watch to locate the swarms usually clustered on a tree branch. The beekeeper would spread an old sheet on the ground before placing an empty hive beneath the branch where they hung. The hive had been fitted with frames previously.

When the branch was shaken gently, the bees dropped on the sheet and crawled into the hive. Swarming bees never sting, so they can be hived without the keeper putting on his bee bonnet.

Bee scouts are sent out to choose a new location, preferably a hollow tree. Early in the morning the swarm follows the scouts to their new home. Each bee fills its honey sack so that their will be enough to build a comb in the new hive. Honey is first digested by each bee and turned into wax to construct the comb.

Sometimes a swarm could be made to settle by creating a lot of noise and throwing sand up into the cloud of bees. Supposedly this

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confusion causes the queen to sit down again.

Cutting down a bee tree in the fall was a favorite pastime from the earliest days in the Wabash Valley.

Tradition has it that Harrison's Army on the march to the Battle of Tippecanoe in 1811 camped on what we know now as Honey Creek Township, south of Terre Haute. In fact, that's how the creek got its name. One of the trees full of honey fell in the creek before the soldiers could get to the precious sweetening.

Wild honey always had a wild flavor. Late-starting colonies could store mostly buckwheat, goldenrod or wild aster honey. Honey produced from this nectar was very dark and had a strong flavor and was used for baking ginger cookies, mince meat and puddings. Basswood and clover honey in the comb was used on the table or sold and bartered for other goods.

No one would think of cutting down a bee tree with someone else's mark on it. There was a trick to locating them. One used a tree

finder consisting of a small box containing a candle covered by a small frame of glass on which a film of honey was spread.

The hunter would go out into an open field, light the candle and wait for the bees to smell the heated honey and fly down. After the bee sucked up a sackful, the hunter would note its line of flight. He would move to another part of the field and repeat the same procedure. By a process of triangulation he would calculate where the honey tree was located.

On a cold night in November, the tree could be cut and split open yielding as much as a wash boiler full of honey in the comb. There was no danger of being stung as the bees were too sluggish to fly.

It was necessary to strain the honey mixed with bees and the bee bread made from pollen through cheese cloth before storing it in a large stone jar.

Honey never spoils, and never crystalizes if it's heated to about 160 degrees. If not heated it becomes sugar in about a year's time.

HISTORY - VC ? + Clark P. Did cotton growing ever get off ground in Honey Creek?

T. MAY 5 1985

An overflow crowd packed the hall of the City School House on the morning of May 10, 1862, "pursuant to a call which had been extensively circulated and especially addressed to agriculturists to take under advisement the feasibility of the culture of cotton in Vigo County."

According to the 123-year-old report, "the county was thoroughly represented in the convention, including many of its wealthiest and most substantial agriculturists and scientific notables. On the motion of Andrew McGuire, General Britton M. Harrison was called to preside as temporary chairman."

Harrison had been active in the community since 1818, serving as mayor 1839-1848, as inspector of salt for Vigo County in 1842, elected as city councilman in 1855 and again in 1858 from the Fourth Ward, in addition to being president of the Firemen's Association.

On taking the chair, the venerable public servant made some entertaining and instructive remarks concerning the early history of this part of Indiana. He went on at length about the previous efforts to cultivate cotton plants in this county. He told about seeing the Lost Creek bottoms whitened more than once with the bursting bolls of the genus "Gossypium."

Cotton was used in Vigo County long before Eli Whitney invented the cotton gin. Aunt Garry Blacksom told about when there were not more than 20 families in Honey Creek Township. She could remember when almost every farmer raised a small field of cotton, so the farmers' wives and daughters could spin and weave it into cloth. Before the invention of the cotton gin, the children were employed in picking out the seed, a slow, tedious process.

Historically speaking



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To many of the farmers present at the meeting, Harrison's remarks seemed unbelievable. The old man observed their reaction and facetiously remarked, "Maybe you question my veracity?"

He called on his old friend, Conrad Shoup, to bear witness that he had paid for the splendid farm he owned in the county from proceeds of the cotton plants grown upon it. Shoup testified to that true statement, and added that it had been a constant source of regret that he had abandoned the culture of cotton. He felt he had been the loser by that action.

Harrison pursued the subject at great length, explaining that the Northern States were wholly independent of cotton whether of our own continent or foreign governments and how that tied in with the difficulties of that time. The Civil War was in progress in 1862 when this meeting was called.

At the conclusion of his remarks, Harrison announced that a motion to organize the cotton growers association was in order. Serving on the first committee to look into the matter were the Rev. James Hook, Dr. E. B. Allen, Prof. William Clark, L. M. Meredith, Major S. H.

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Community Affairs File

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Potter, the Rev. Sanford Bond, Judge L. Ryce, Charles E. Hosford, the Hon. Cally Saddler and one man whose name was illegible in the original document.

The meeting then was addressed by the Hon. Alfred Cole, formerly a resident of Alabama, who had cultivated cotton and believed it could be grown in this latitude with great profit.

The committee returned from their private meeting and reported the following recommendations: That a permanent organization of three officers and a ways and means committee to be formed; that the large and well-appointed farm known as the Honey Creek Prairie Farm be rented from the owner as soon as possible, and that teams and plows be purchased and sufficient workers be employed to work the farm during the coming season; that since the season was pretty well advanced the work should start immediately; and that the committee ascertain the cost of a cotton gin and fixtures and report all of this at the next stated meeting of the association.

The report was adopted. Officers chosen included Harrison, president; George W. Canada, secretary; and Andrew McGuire, treasurer. Serving on the ways and means committee were the Hon. Alfred Cole, Dr. Solomon Jackson, the Rev. James Hook, John Jackson and L. M. Wardell.

The president of the finance committee announced that they would be pleased to receive subscriptions since a larger fund would be necessary to carry on this desirable enterprise and must be raised at once. Subscribed on the spot was the sum of \$3,750 and more was promised within a few days.

Harrison again made some pertinent remarks and predicted success before the meeting adjourned to meet in the same place May 17.

The minutes of the newly formed Vigo County Cotton Growers Association were signed by the president and the secretary. As a footnote, the secretary was "instructed to furnish copies of the minutes to The Express, The Journal, and the Cincinnati Commercial with a request that the same be published?"

What happened to this association? Did they get a crop that year? How long did the group try to grow cotton in this Wabash Valley, and exactly where was the farm in Honey Creek they used?

Amid the elm groves

Area let residents enjoy the good life

T's JUN 2 1985

Clark, Dorothy
History (VH)

Located north of the spotlight intersection of Lafayette Road and Park Avenue in North Terre Haute, Elm Grove has a long history of community involvement. Old-timers living in the area knew the property first as the McMullen farm when groves of elm trees afforded shade for cattle. At that time the cow pasture was surrounded by a rail fence to keep the animals from straying too far.

Otter Creek had always provided several good swimming holes for the boys of pioneer families living near its meandering path to the Wabash River. Bathing facilities were few and far between in the early days of settlement in northern Vigo County, and swimming holes served the double purpose of recreation and cleanliness in the hot summer weather.

After religious duties were taken care of on Sunday and the bountiful noon dinner was over, it was time to think of the baseball game at Elm Grove. At first these were just "pick-up" games enjoyed by the younger boys, but America's greatest pastime was soon taken over by the young men in the area.

Teams were formed, and games were scheduled with teams from other parts of the county. Intense rivalries commenced, and soon crowds came to root for the North Terre Haute Grays at the baseball diamond in Elm Grove.

Church picnics were spread in the shade of the Elm Grove trees. Family reunions and all-day picnics were enjoyed, along with

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swimming, dancing and baseball games. By this time the land was owned by Louis Schaumberger, who built the stucco house north of the bridge as his residence.

Seeing the possibilities in developing his property for recreation in the early 1920s, Schaumberger formed a corporation with Otto Erickson, garage owner, Harry Culley, and several other investors. First they built a dance pavilion where matinee dances were held following the ballgames, and dances continued on into the late evening.

William L. Schomer operated the dance hall as a family affair. His wife, Eula, sold dance tickets; their son, Wayne, took tickets; and their daughter, Grace, played the piano with the first dance band along with Dr. Walter "Ted" Anderson, Birch Arkett and David "Todd" Ensminger.

This combo played 42 dances

without intermission. Each dance lasted two minutes and cost a nickel. Young men bought tickets by the yard. The second year "Connie" Conrad joined the band as director, along with Ross Kirchner, Charlie Stark and Newt Alexander.

The Elm Grove dance hall thrived until another dance hall, Summer Gardens, was opened in 1923-24 by John Roberts north of Deming Park and east of the viaduct. The new dance hall offered penny dances, and crowds took advantage of the bargain. Summer Gardens operated until the Trianon opened on Wabash Avenue.

By this time Grace Schomer had graduated from high school and entered college. She didn't have time or the energy for her musical job as much as she enjoyed it. Joe King took her place as pianist. Later she married Everett Spence, the first lifeguard at the Elm Grove swimming hole in Otter Creek, with its sandy beach, diving boards and other facilities.

According to Pauline (Shadley) Baxter, her father, Harvey D. Shadley, and Louis Schaumberger built the beautiful Elm Grove swimming pool in 1922. It proved to be very popular and attracted bathers from all over the Wabash Valley. It was closed in 1942.

During its 20 years of existence, it saw the changes in men's bathing attire from the old-fashioned suits covering the chest to the daring styles that followed with waistline

zippers allowing the tops to be removed by the most daring males. Bathing trunks were considered very modern.

Females wore modest wool or cotton tank suits when the pool was first opened. These heavy-when-wet suits had extra skirts over the mid-thigh undergarment. They were modified to one-piece suits, then to two-piece, exposing the midriff which was considered very daring, and getting briefer as World War II approached.

In 1922 Claude Cummins opened an outdoor barbeque that proved extremely popular with the Elm Grove crowds. His delicious sandwiches are still remembered with nostalgic delight by all those who were lucky enough to have experienced them.

At different times there were all sorts of concession stands at Elm Grove to take care of the needs of such a popular place. They sold popcorn, candy, balloons, toys, ice cream cones and bars, etc.

A huge tent-covered roller skating rink with a wooden floor was constructed in the Elm Grove complex, one of the first in the area. It provided family recreation until it was torched and totally destroyed by vandals.

Elm Grove brought prosperity and recreation to the North Terre Haute community by bringing in people from all over the valley to spend money while enjoying themselves.

West T

McQuilkin started what's now

When Samuel McQuilkin sold his tavern on the northeast corner of Third and Main streets in Terre Haute, he invested in land across the Wabash River where West Terre Haute now is located. He platted the town and named it McQuilkinsville. This proved to be quite a mouthful for the early settlers traveling the National Road, and it became known as Macksville.

Exactly when the land was surveyed into lots is not known, but the plat was recorded Nov. 23, 1836. McQuilkin built the first dwelling house in 1833 between what is now Third and Fourth Streets, and a year or so later he opened a store and sold everything from smoked meat to whiskey. Smith Finch opened a tavern at what is now Third Street and National Avenue.

A shrewd businessman, McQuilkin realized the profits to be made by selling necessities to the workmen employed in the construction of the National Road. They needed work clothes, shoes,

Historically speaking



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tobacco, canned fruit and other food items to augment their meager diet.

Cookhouses were set up by the road-building contractors to feed the men three squares a day. They lived in tents without many creature comforts. Stores within walking distance of the work camps could make a profit. Many of the road workers married local girls and became permanent residents.

Clark, Dorothy
Barber shops with attached bathing facilities were favorite spots on weekends. Grog shops were set up in rude shed-like buildings. Planks laid across barrels or saw-horses served as the bar for dispensing alcoholic beverages of any kind available. Houses of ill fame set up in the area and thrived if the church people didn't drive them out first.

In 1867 John Griggs and his son Edward erected a custom flour mill and began grinding the next year. They continued to run the mill successfully until 1870-72 when it was struck by lightning and burned to the ground.

Most of the land on which West Terre Haute now stands was once owned by Philomer T. Dean who acquired 260 acres from the federal government in 1817. Pioneers west of the Wabash River tackled the dense forests with their axes, and soon little clearings dotted the wilderness. They needed a place to buy supplies; items they were unable to raise themselves, and crossing the river by ferry or ford

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was extremely hazardous in times of high water. A trading post west of the river was badly needed.

The town's name was shortened to Mac'sville. Later the apostrophe was omitted and the letter "k" inserted in its place. So the town was called Macksville or Maxville.

Mrs. McQuilkin was a lady of many talents. She opened the first school in Sugar Creek Township in the rear of her husband's store. The school was maintained by popular subscription. Township elections also were held in this building in the 1850s.

In 1862 Professor Elias Shumer taught a subscription school in the historic structure. Robert McIlroy opened a store a short time later. In 1872 he built the first brick building on Paris Avenue. Three years later he built the first post office when he became postmaster, a position he held for more than 20 years. The name of the post office was officially changed to West Terre Haute in 1898.

Josiah Adgerton built the first blacksmith shop on Lot 70 on

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National Avenue in the early 1850s. He made the first steel plough shovel used on the National Road.

Mr. Jones built the first steam sawmill just north of Paris Avenue where later a lumber company was located. A brickyard stood near the site of the former school.

The first Sunday School in Macksville was organized in 1870 in a small frame school building erected by Erastus Church just north of the railroad at the close of the Civil War. The Rev. Benson Rippetoe conducted the first religious service in the building.

Ellen Broadhurst, Henry McNeary and John Van Cleave taught the "Three Rs" in the day school. The building was struck by lightning in 1875, but the damage was repaired and it remained in use until the Vandalia Railroad acquired the land north of the tracks. The building was moved to the site of the later high school and continued to serve as a school for many years.

By 1880, Macksville had a population of 250, two stores, a blacksmith and wheelright shop for

custom work, a sawmill, a shingle-machine shop and a cigar factory.

Until 1881 a little frame school building stood on the site where the brick school was built; it was replaced in 1908. In 1920 there were six self-supporting churches in West Terre Haute. Dr. Hunt, Mr. Corning and J. M. Fields organized the Congregational Church in 1884 and built the first church building the next year on the site of the present church.

The Rev. James Hayes was the first pastor. The cornerstone was placed on July 9, 1885, by Capt. Potter of Terre Haute. The building stood until another church was built in 1907.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, organized in 1897, built its church building in 1900. Alice Belt, Mollie Miller and Francis Mopps were included among its founders. The Baptist Church was organized July 22, 1919. A building was erected soon after.

In 1895, the population of West Terre Haute had increased to 500; 10 years later to 3,500 in 1905. By 1920 the town boasted 4,380 residents.

Tales of the pioneers

Township-by-township sketches from the past

1 SEP 17 1989

Last week's column began the tale of one pioneer from each of the 12 townships of Vigo County. Following are the remaining six.

Lost Creek Township — William G. Craig, farmer and stock-grower, was born in Brown Co., Ohio, in 1833, the son of John and Isabel (Wishart) Craig, natives of Pennsylvania. The father came to Clay County, Ind., in 1845.

William G. Craig was the fifth in a family of 10 children. He married in 1863 Alvina, daughter of John and Martha (Martin) Rogers. They had seven children, but only three were living in 1891: Clifford C., Tena A., and Samantha.

Craig learned the cooper's trade and worked at it eight years before taking over his 80-acre farm in Lost Creek Township.

In 1861 he enlisted for three months in the 19th Regt., 1st Indiana Cavalry, and served the full term in camp. He then enlisted for three years in the same company and participated in the battles of Carnifax Ferry, Bull Run, Rappahannock, Nashville, and others.

He was discharged in April 1863, and re-enlisted in December 1864, this time in the 126th Regt., 11th Ind. Cavalry and served to the end of the war. He contracted chronic bowel disease and was not able to work for 15 years. He was a member of GAR Leslie Post 410.

Sugar Creek Township — W. C. Calvert, farmer and stock-grower of Sugar Creek Township, was born in 1842 in Fayette Township, the son of Robert and Susan (Cromwell) Calvert. His father was a carpenter in the

Historically speaking



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railroad shops. His mother was a native of Maryland and of German descent.

Calvert's grandfather came to America in 1838 and settled in Fayette Township. In 1863 he moved to Clark County, Ill., where he continued to farm.

In 1871 Calvert married Julia Mayhew. He served in the 133rd Ind. Volunteer Infantry, Co. H., for four months, then re-enlisted in the 149th Volunteer Infantry, Co. H.

Harrison Township — Aaron Conover was a farmer in Harrison Township, where he owned 112 acres in Section 9. A native of Vigo County, he was born in 1853, son of Ralph and Elenor (Snedicker) Conover.

They were the parents of 10 children, six of whom were living in 1891: Jane, Alfred, Aaron, Gertrude, Eliza and Ralph.

Aaron Sr. died in 1888 and his widow moved to Terre Haute. His son was reared on the farm and became a prominent agriculturalist. He was married in

Vigo County to Nettie Metcalf who was born in 1856 in Edgar County, Ill. Their four children were Coral, Warren, Earl and Beulah.

Conover was supervisor of Harrison Township in 1888 and re-elected in 1890. They lived in a handsome brick house, with good barns, etc. In addition to farming, he raised prize fruit trees.

Prairieton Township — Marshall N. Bentley, native of Vigo County, was a young farmer of 120 acres in 1891. He was born in 1864, the youngest of seven children of Charles E. (of Kentucky) and Nancy (Coffman) Bentley (of Pennsylvania), early settlers of this county.

In 1887 Marshall married Lora, daughter of C. H. and Ophelia Morgan. By 1891 his wife had produced a son, Homer Bentley. Marshall served as trustee of his township. He was a Republican and probably the youngest man ever elected to that office.

Pierson Township — Adrian Bitcher (the name was changed later to Beecher) was born in 1857 in Pierson Township near Soonover. His parents were George and Keziah (Grover) Bitcher, both born in Ohio, and coming to Vigo County in 1855 in a team and wagon with \$30 in cash.

A Republican, George improved his farm to 185 acres and served as township trustee. They belonged to Fletcher Chapel M.E. Church.

Adrian's grandparents were Abram and Elizabeth (Coffinberry) Bitcher. Abram was born in Basle, Switzerland, and came to the United States before he married, locating first in Pennsylvania, then

Ohio where he married Keziah, daughter of Levi and Cassie Grover of Vermont.

Adrian was the fifth of six children. He attended Pierson Township schools and Ascension Academy in Sullivan. He taught school in Fayette Township at the age of 16 years, but soon returned to farming.

Active in his community, he married in 1879 Kate, daughter of Harden and Phoebe Hodges, who was born in 1857. They had five children: Walter L., Mary Lucinda, Gertrude, Eloise and Genevera.

Riley Township — M. Murle, a merchant at Lockport (now the town of Riley), was the owner and proprietor of a general store. He was born in 1842 at Baden, Germany, one of four children of Joseph Murle who was born in 1808, also in Germany.

The father came to America in 1853, and settled his family in Marion County, Ohio, on a farm where the son was reared. In 1861 Murle moved to Vigo County, and learned the blacksmith's trade at Terre Haute, which he followed for four years, before clerking in a store and working as salesman until 1875.

That year he opened his business at Lockport, and made it a success. He also owned a farm of 80 acres. In politics he was a Democrat. In 1869 he married in Terre Haute Josephine Ashberger, a native of Wurtemberg, Germany. Their three children were Charles F., Lena J., and William, who died young. They attended German Lutheran Church.

Vigo County Pioneer
Community Affairs File

The birth of Prairie Creek

Pottersville was predecessor to Vigo County town

About 1820 a small village known as Pottersville appeared about a half mile south of the present location of Prairie Creek. The clay used in the three potters' shops was hauled from the area where Brazil is now and was mixed with clay dug near the shops.

Three or four log cabins and the potters' sheds made up the first settlement of Pottersville. The stagecoach running from Merom to Fort Harrison passed through the present site of Prairie Creek. Since it was the halfway point, it became known as Middletown.

According to Lola E. Brown's history of the town, one of the last drivers of the hack was Arch Kisner. The stagecoach stop was a large, two-story house which stood on the site of Ona Hall's residence in the 1960s. At that time the land was owned by James Piety on the east and Elijah Thomas on the west. Each donated land for the town and helped in platting it.

Daniel Johnson, Piety, Thomas, James Ernest and Vincent Yeager surveyed the ground in 1820, using grape vines for a surveyor's chain. The northern boundary was where the Baptist church stands, and the home of E. R. Piety marked the southern boundary.

In 1816 a log Baptist church was built near the site of the present church. Land was donated by James Piety for a graveyard.

The Church of Christ was built in 1850, and a rudely constructed school house on the eastern edge of town marked the beginning of education for Prairie Creek's

Historically speaking



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children. This log cabin had a fireplace on the ground. Smoke escaped through a hole in the roof.

Later a small, one-room log school was built south of the Church of Christ on what was later the property of Delbert Rhodes. The first teacher was Mary Lovelace.

In 1821 a sawmill and gristmill were built on Prairie Creek. Later, a sawmill and wooden factory stood west of town. A distillery was erected in 1825 by a Mr. Kelley from Kentucky. Located about two miles southeast of Prairie Creek, Kelley's products were sold at \$5 a barrel to the townspeople and those in the outlying area.

About 1835 a tanyard was started, along with a brick and tile mill, and Mr. Wilkinson's blacksmith shop. In 1831 McDonald built a hotel, later owned by Copeland. In 1836 another hotel was erected by Daniel Johnson on land later

owned by Ranes Deal.

About 1900 a hotel was operated by Mr. and Mrs. Alpheus L. Athey where the American Legion property now stands. The facade of this building is part of the original structure.

Prairie Creek has had a post office since 1831, but it's been moved frequently. First the stagecoach carried the mail, then the hack which ran between Fairbanks and Terre Haute. Still later the mail was carried from Farmersburg daily except Sunday by a rural carrier. Because another town in Indiana claimed the name of Middletown, it was necessary to change the name to Prairie Creek.

Joe Harper's store, one of the pioneer business places, is still standing. O.L. Wilson, a harness maker by trade, was in business from 1880 to 1930.

William Gobin moved to Prairie Creek in 1832 and operated a brick plant at the southern edge of town. He and his sons built most of the brick buildings in Prairie Creek. The old Gobin mill burned in 1943.

There has been a funeral director in town for well over a century, beginning with David Weir, followed by Josephus Weir, Harry Welch, Tommy Weir and Curt DeBaun.

The resident physician was Dr. Eliphalet Shattuck who had an extensive practice until his death in 1840. Other physicians were Dr. Thomas Lloyd, Dr. Payne and Dr. J.R. Wilson.

It was never in the cards for

Prairie Creek to have a railroad. In 1907, however, the Terre Haute & Merom Traction Company was organized and an interurban line from Terre Haute through the east edge of Prairie Creek and on to Merom was surveyed.

By 1908 part of the grade was completed, and some bridges were built before the company went into receivership and the project was never completed. Part of the grade can still be seen east of Prairie Creek and north of Prairieton on Indiana 63.

In 1913 the Piety Brothers Bottling Works, owned and operated by E.R. and O.T. Piety, was started in a small store building south of what was later Earl Reed's General Store. The next year they moved the business to a new building on the west side of the street.

The upstairs of this building was used for basketball games and traveling shows. In this Opera House several famous performances were enjoyed, including "Way Down East" and "Over the Hill to the Poor House."

A stock company owned by Milton and Vincent Yeager, M.H. Piety, and others operated a Creamery at the south edge of town. Perry Johnson, a young man from Carlisle, was the buttermaker.

Later another industry, a stock company, was located at the foot of the hill north of the Baptist church. This factory canned tomatoes, but was short-lived.

Community Affairs File

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Sandford another victim of times

1994

The history of the small town of Sandford in the west-central portion of Fayette Township in Vigo County began across the state line in Stratton Township in Edgar County, Ill. It was founded by Isaac Sandford in 1819-1820.

Leaving his home at Long Island, N.Y., Sandford traveled to Cincinnati, where he worked at the Gilmore Brothers Bank, owned by his brother-in-law. From there he traveled on to Illinois, where he was among the first settlers.

Isaac Sandford married Belinda Foster, daughter of Judge Luke Foster. Their children were Hiram (first white child born in Stratton township), Phebe and Harriet.

He became a wealthy and prominent citizen in his area, and active in its growth. In 1827 he helped survey the Paris-Clinton Road. However, his project to form a stock company for a steam mill failed.

During the 1832 Blackhawk War, he joined the volunteers from Stratton and Elbridge townships. He was elected first lieutenant under Capt. J.M. Blackburn. Later, Blackburn was elected colonel of the First Regiment, and Sandford became captain of the First Regiment, Second Brigade, of the Illinois Mounted Volunteers.

Following the brief Indian uprising, Sandford returned to his farm, which was growing in size and importance. Work was beginning on the Terre Haute to Alton, Ill., railroad. Large investments in the project were being made by residents along the proposed route during the speculative fever of 1835.

Payment was made in state bonds. Men were contracted to grade the road, while Sandford furnished the timber for bridges and ties needed in the construction. But the system declined, leaving depreciated bonds in the hands of investors.

However, Sandford was able to realize a portion of his investment as he reclaimed in back his timber which he



Historically Speaking

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During the next few years, the Sandford farm continued to grow. Within a 13-month period in 1837-38, Sandford bought and sold a total of 213 acres in three parcels in two Edgar County townships. The farm eventually encompassed 11,000 acres, a cemetery, and a Methodist Church. At one time or another, Sandford ran a blacksmith shop, tannery, brick yard, grocery store, and a saw and grist mill.

The blacksmith shop was the first in Elbridge township; the tannery, one of the first industries in Edgar County. Bricks for the Methodist Episcopal Church in Vermilion, Ill., were taken from Sandford's farm. In 1842 he opened a small store on the Illinois-Indiana state line, a typical general store that carried everything.

During 1843, Hiram Sandford married Eleanor Young in Edgar County. He became part owner of both the store and the mill. One source places the death of Isaac in 1852, while a document was found with his signature dated June 1853.

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The family retired for the night, the Tritts sleeping downstairs, and Miss Tritt upstairs. The murderer crept in the house and placed a stocking soaked with chloroform between the sleeping couple.

He then went upstairs, stabbed the girl, and rolled her body in a carpet. One account states that he first cut off her head and legs. Kerosene was poured and ignited. The flames spread through the house, and the blaze could be seen from Paris, Ill.

The Tritts were able to escape the fire. The neighbors turned out to hunt down the murderer, who had fled unseen, possibly jumping a train as it slowed down for the Sandford crossing. Some believed him to be hidden beneath a straw sack where his trunk was found.

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Early in 1907, two events occurred in Sandford that are still talked about. On Jan. 19, 60 to 80 people boarded a passenger train in Terre Haute. As it approached Sandford crossing, freight train No. 99 was on the siding with three cars containing explosives bound for East Alton, Ill.

The No. 3 train approached the depot at 5 to 15 miles per hour. As the train passed the freight train, something happened which has never been explained. One, perhaps two, explosions were heard. Flames spread over the debris. Bodies were crushed, dismembered, mutilated, some beyond recognition. The entire train was reduced to scrap iron, and eight cars of the freight train were destroyed.

Human bodies, metal and personal papers, were strewn in a radius of 500 feet on both sides of the tracks in a 20-acre field and woods. Window glass of every house in Sandford was broken from the blast. The station clock recorded time of the disaster at 8:50 p.m. Thirty people were killed outright or died as the result of injuries. Victims were rushed to area hospitals; 20 doctors arrived to help.

The second event occurred less than a month later, when the Methodist Episcopal Church was dynamited. Since there was no one in the church, no one was killed. It remained a mystery who set the explosive and for what reason. Some say one of the young men accused of the crime was tried, convicted, and imprisoned for life but served only 15 years. He was Roger MacDonald who owned a saloon in the village.

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Sandford another victim of times

JUN 19 1954

The history of the small town of Sandford in the west-central portion of Fayette Township in Vigo County began across the state line in Stratton Township in Edgar County, Ill. It was founded by Isaac Sandford in 1819-1820.

Leaving his home at Long Island, N.Y., Sandford traveled to Cincinnati, where he worked at the Gilmore Brothers Bank, owned by his brother-in-law. From there he traveled on to Illinois, where he was among the first settlers.

Isaac Sandford married Belinda Foster, daughter of Judge Luke Foster. Their children were Hiram (first white child born in Stratton township), Phebe and Harriet.

He became a wealthy and prominent citizen in his area, and active in its growth. In 1827 he helped survey the Paris-Clinton Road. However, his project to form a stock company for a steam mill failed.

During the 1832 Blackhawk War, he joined the volunteers from Stratton and Elbridge townships. He was elected first lieutenant under Capt. J.M. Blackburn. Later, Blackburn was elected colonel of the First



Historically Speaking

By Dorothy Clark

Special to the Tribune-Star
Regiment, and Sandford became captain of the First Regiment, Second Brigade, of the Illinois Mounted Volunteers.

Following the brief Indian uprising, Sandford returned to his farm, which was growing in size and importance. Work was beginning on the Terre Haute to Alton, Ill., railroad. Large investments in the project were being made by residents along the proposed route during the speculative fever of 1835.

Payment was made in state bonds. Men were contracted to grade the road, while Sandford furnished the timber for bridges and ties needed in the construction. But the system declined, leaving depreciated bonds in the hands of investors.

However, Sandford was able to realize a portion of his investment as he reclaimed in back payment his timber, which he later sold "down the river."

During the next few years, the Sandford farm continued to grow. Within a 13-month period in 1837-38, Sandford bought and sold a total of 213 acres in three parcels in two Edgar County townships. The farm eventually encompassed 11,000 acres, a cemetery, and a Methodist Church. At one time or another, Sandford ran a blacksmith shop, tannery, brick yard, grocery store, and a saw and grist mill.

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A victim of the times, Sandford could not compete with Terre Haute, but Sandford has its memories.

Fayette Township settled in 1817

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The first permanent settler in Fayette Township, previously known as Independence Township, was Daniel Barbour Sr., who took up land on Section 18 late in the year 1817.

In 1818, other families came into the township, all from the state of New York, as did the Barbours. Later families came from Southern states, along with Irish immigrants, and they settled in other sections of the township.

Daniel Barbour Sr. (1780-1878) was born at Washington, N.Y. His wife, Elizabeth Taggart (1787-1882) was born in Rhode Island. The oldest of their seven children was born in Jefferson County, N.Y., and traveled with the family out to Indiana, where the rest of the children were born.

The family included Corey, born 1807; Cromwell Wolsey, born 1809; Orson, John H., Armand, Mary and Daniel Jr.

Early in 1817, the Barbour family embarked at Olean Point, N.Y., and came downriver in a pirogue. They landed some three months later at Evansville, where there were only two or three houses to mark the townsite.

Slowly they traveled to Vigo County (which was still part of Sullivan County before 1818) and settled on the land where they lived all their lives.

Barbour told of swimming his horse across the prairie east of Terre Haute, not far from where the Terre Haute House was later built. He passed through Fort Harrison and Otter Creek



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prairies, and settled on the heavy timber lands of Fayette Township.

Game of all kinds swarmed through this country in those days. Native Americans made the forests their home. On Barbour's Prairie near the banks of the Wabash River was a Native American village on the south side of Broulette Creek, so named for a Frenchman who traded with and lived among the Native Americans in the early days. Once, Broulette was obliged to "run the gauntlet" according to Native American custom.

The first school house in Fayette Township was constructed of logs on Section 18 in 1818. Here John Miles taught the first school, and the Rev. Joseph Curtis preached the first sermon.

Corey Barbour (1807-1879) became a farmer on land bought by his father in 1826. He was probably the first magistrate in the township, even though the distinction was also claimed for Elisha Parsons. Barbour served prior to 1830.

One of his decisions gave rise

to a somewhat whimsical adage. According to early archives of Terre Haute, a road was laid out from Terre Haute to Section 16 in Fayette Township, terminating at a "red-oak tree."

Someone had fenced in this tree, claiming that it was on the side and not the center of the line of the road.

A lawsuit grew out of the dispute. The saying referred to expresses the idea that when a road is so indefinite as to go nowhere, "it goes to a red-oak tree."

The Hon. Cromwell Wolsey Barbour (1809-1889) who came with the family in 1817, helped on the farm until he was 21 years of age. His father sent him to Bloomington College (State University) from 1829 until 1832. Then he entered the law office of Judge Isaac Black at Indianapolis, where he read law.

In May 1835, he was licensed to practice law and began his career at Terre Haute, where he formed a partnership with the Hon. Richard W. Thompson. Barbour continued to practice law until April 1861, when he moved to his 160-acre farm that he had purchased in 1852.

C.W. Barbour was the county commissioner for school lands and a leader in public education. In 1850 he was a member of the Constitutional Convention. In November 1852, when the Prairie City Bank of Terre Haute was organized, he was elected president and served until 1857. In 1880 he owned 350 acres.

In 1840, C.W. Barbour mar-

ried the governor's niece, Derexa Whitcomb, daughter of Benjamin R. and Arma Whitcomb of Ohio. They had eight children: Emma C., Mary E., S. Louise, Susan W., W. Raymond, H. Albert, Jennie and Florence E.

The first white child born in Fayette Township was Mary (or Eliza) Barbour, born Oct. 27, 1818, the daughter of Daniel Barbour Sr. She later became the wife of Dr. H.T. Ketchum.

Not too much is known about the other children. Orson had three children. D.B. Jr. married Martha Cobb and had five children. He was the youngest child, born 1821, died 1893. Armand Barbour married Martha Clayton. Corey's wife was named Lora. There is no record of children.

A family reunion was conducted on the 90th birthday of the old pioneer. Fifty of his descendants sat down to a bountiful table. Mrs. Barbour was 83 years old. They had been married 65 years.

Born in 1780, he was older than this government, older than the Constitution. He was 9 years old when Washington was inaugurated as first president, and 16 when Washington delivered his farewell address.

Barbour lived to be 94 years old, dying in 1875. He was buried in Barbour Cemetery in Section 18, first cemetery established in Fayette Township. The coming together of county and state roads in that area is still called Barbour's Corner. The home is gone. Only the cemetery remains.

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